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# A Good Long Way



## Synopsis

"Stop it. The two of you, stop it! You're father and son; you should love each other." Roelito howls at his father and older brother as their heated argument turns into a pushing, shoving match. Beto has again come home way past curfew, and worse, smelling like a cantina. When Beto Sr. tells his son that he either needs to follow the rules or leave, the boy--a senior in high school and a man as far as he's concerned--decides to leave, right then, in the middle of the night. Once he has walked away, though, he realizes he has nowhere to go. Maybe his best friend Jessy--a hard-as-nails girl who has run away before can help him. The story of Beto's decision to run away and drop out of school is told from shifting perspectives in which the conflicted lives of Roel, Beto, and Jessy are revealed in short, poignant scenes that reflect teen-age life along the Texas-Mexico border. Each one has a good long way to go in growing up. Roel fights against the teachers' assumptions that he's like Beto. Unlike his big brother, Roel is book smart and actually enjoys school. Jessy is smart too, but most of her teachers can't see beyond her tough-girl façade. Her parents are so busy fighting with each other that they don't notice her, even if she's packing a suitcase to leave. And Beto . . . somewhere along the way he quit caring about school. And his teachers have noticed and given up too. Author and educator Rene Saldaña, Jr. once again writes a fast-paced, thought-provoking novel that will engage young adults in questions about their own lives and responsibilities to family, friends, and most of all, to themselves.

## Book Information

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Paperback: 128 pages

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Language: English

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #399,907 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #52 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Runaways #84 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Runaways #368 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Hispanic & Latino

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up—A coming-of-age novel set in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Beto Lopez is a high school senior who thinks that family rules no longer apply to him. Roelito, an A student, wants to be like his “cool” older brother, yet Beto’s bad habits of staying out late, skipping class, and making poor grades concern him. After a late-night confrontation with their father, Beto runs away from home. His first thought is to turn to Jessy, his best friend, for help and guidance. She wants out of her deplorable home life, too, but also wants to go to college and knows that being alone in the world and without plans is never the answer. The story unfolds during a 24-hour period and is advanced through the thoughts and feelings of the three main characters. Jessy wisely concludes that unless you have inner peace, running will not make your situation better. This fast-paced novel will make readers think about their own lives and responsibilities.—Sharon Morrison, Henry G. Bennett Memorial Library, Durant, OK. (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

At 2 a.m., Roelito wakes up to a furious quarrel between his older brother, Beto, 18, and Dad over a broken curfew. When Dad tells Beto to leave, he does, and his best friend, Jessy, helps him find shelter for the night. She knows about running away; she flees the house whenever her drunken father and her mother scream and fight. Can she wait out the two months to graduation and make it to college? Told in the spare, shifting viewpoints of Roelito, Beto, and Jessy, this short novel, set in a Texas border town and peppered with Spanish phrases, is an absorbing narrative of anger, guilt, sorrow, and hope. When they spend the day together, Beto and Dad apologize, and Beto recognizes Dad’s daily struggle. College-bound Roelito loves his brother but recognizes their differences and focuses on his GPA. With the support of a teacher, Jessy learns to hang on, despite the terror in her violent home. The intense fights will grab readers, and so will the friendship and love. A great choice for readers’ theater. Grades 8-11. --Hazel Rochman

exactly what we ordered and expected

Book in very good conditions.

Adulthood comes at many kids like a pile of bricks. "A Good Long Way" follows three teenagers as they come to terms with their lives. Beto leaves home after clashing with his father one too many times and looks to Jessy for guidance on living on his own, no longer caring for school. Roel, Beto's brother, struggles with the conflicts of his father and trying to make his own way in the world. A story of growing up all too quickly, "A Good Long Way" is a solid and very highly recommended read.

Can't wait for this book to be in stock. If it is anything close to Rene's other books it will be a must read for everyone!

for this book you re going to have to know Spanish and english because it contains both i feel that this book had no big shockers and because of that it was underwhelming and boring. it was just a waste of time.

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